RURAL DISTRICT OF EAST STOW.

REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1908.

To the Chairman and Members of the

East Stow Rural District Council.

7TH JANUARY, 1909.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting to you my Twelfth Annual Report on the Health of the East Stow Rural District, for the year ending the 31st December, 1908.

Vital Statistics.

I have estimated the population of this District to the middle of the year as 5830, and based the following statistics on that number.

Birth Rate, 26.0 per 1000.

The number of Births registered was 152 (boys 71, girls 81), which gives a Birth Rate of 26.0 per 1000, compared with 24.9 per 1000 last year, and exactly equal to the average for the previous ten years.

The Birth Rate for the Thedwastre District was 24.6 per 1000, and for Stowmarket 23.7 per 1000.

Death Rate, 14.7 per 1000.

There were 102 Deaths registered in the District during the year (males 51, females 51). Of these deaths 22 occurred in the Union Workhouse, 10 of which were of persons belonging to the Thedwastre District, 8 to Stowmarket and 4 to the East Stow District; besides these there was one death of a person belonging to the district, in the Ipswich Hospital, and also one in the Melton Lunatic Asylum. Deducting and adding these numbers we get the correct number of deaths, viz. 86 for this District; equal to a Death Rate of 14.7 per 1000, compared with 12.8 last year and an average of 14.1 for the previous 10 years.

The Death Rate for the Thedwastre District was 15.0 per 1000, and for Stowmarket 16.5 per 1000.

Infant Mortality, 105 per 1000 Births.

Of the total number of Deaths, 16 were of infants under 1 year of age, giving an Infant Mortality of 105 per 1000 Births, compared with 129 last year, and an average of 115 for the previous 10 years.

The Infant Mortality for the Thedwastre District was 82 per 1000 Births, and for Stowmarket 80.

Zymotic Death Rate Nil.

This year there were no Deaths from the 7 principal Zymotic Diseases.

This Death Rate for the Thedwastre District was nil, and for Stowmarket 0.4.

Amongst the other Deaths occurring during the year (see Table IV) there were 11 caused by Phthisis, compared with 4 last year; 6 caused by Cancer, compared with 1 last year; 8 caused by Diseases of the Respiratory Organs, compared with 7 last year; 12 from Heart Diseases, compared with 8 last year; the same number as last year caused by Accident, viz. 5; and 10 were returned as due to Old Age, compared with 4 last year.

We have had a healthy year, without any long continuance of very cold weather, and a rainfall below the average; also till the end of the year there were no extensive outbreaks of Infectious Diseases; consequently the Zymotic Death Rate is nil, and the Infant Mortality is lowered.

The Birth Rate is much higher than the last few years, and the Death Rate, which ought to have been lower, is practically 2 per 1000 higher than last year; of course the Death Rate ought not to be so high in a Rural District, (but it is lower than Stowmarket) and the probable cause is the insanitary conditions of many of the cottages and their surroundings; one third of the Deaths were of persons over 70 years of age, and one-fourth of children under 15.

Last year the two villages Combs and Stowupland, which are partly Urban, compared very unfavourably as to the Infant Mortality with the rest of the District, the Rate being 164 per 1000 Births, compared to 105. This year matters are much worse, the figures being for Combs and Stowupland 157 per 1000 Births, and for the rest of the District 74.

Infectious Diseases.

There were 56 notifications of Infectious Diseases received during the year, compared with 26 last year.

The Cases are as follows:—

Diphtheria 8, compared with 10 last year.

Erysipelas 1, compared with 5 last year.

Enteric Fever 1, the same as last year.

Scarlet Fever 46, compared with 10 last year.

The cases of Diphtheria were notified from Finborough, Stowupland, Combs, Buxhall, and the Workhouse.

The case of Erysipelas was notified from Wetherden.

The case of Enteric Fever was notified from Stowupland.

Scarlet Fever: two cases in January were notified from Combs, and the rest since 21st November from Old Newton. This latter outbreak is still going on and spreading to surrounding districts.

With regard to this outbreak at Old Newton, on the 21st November, I wrote to the Schoolmaster to exclude children peeling after so-called attacks of Measles, until certified by a Doctor as free from infection, as they were possibly suffering from Scarlet Fever. There was one boy so suffering in the infant school and the Schoolmaster, after consulting the Parents, came to the conclusion that the child had not Scarlet Fever, so allowed him back to school. I heard of this on the 26th and immediately visited the school and found the boy in an infectious condition and suffering from Scarlet Fever. I dismissed the infants at once and sent to the Parents of the boy a message to the above effect. Notwithstanding this, the Parents brought the boy next day down to Stowmarket, where I happened to meet him. I advised a prosecution in this case, as there were other cases in Old Newton of similar gross carelessness, and hoped it would act as a warning. The Father was fined £3 and costs.

Factory Act. The Factories and Workshops in the District to the number of 26, coming under the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, were inspected and were found to be in a satisfactory condition. One written notice was served, to construct sanitary arrangements into sewer, and this has been complied with.

Water Supply. The soil in this District is chiefly mixed loam and clay, with a sub-soil of heavy clay, except at Haughley and Wetherden where it is chiefly gravel.

Buxhall, Finborough, Gipping, Harleston, Onehouse, Shelland and Wetherden obtain their water for domestic purposes from shallow wells or ponds, always liable to pollution.

Haughley has a fairly good water supply from a well at the top of the street; other parts of the village have ponds and a few private wells.

Combs from unsafe ponds and shallow wells, and 3 ponds made and kept up by the Council.

Old Newton from one deep well in the chalk (an absolutely safe supply), polluted ponds, a few private wells and four ponds made and kept up by the Council, also from surface field drainage.

Creeting from a deep well in the chalk, pumped up by a windmill into settling tanks; this is the most satisfactory supply in the District.

Stowupland by 4 ponds made and kept up by the Council, a few shallow wells, and the Urban part of the village partly by the Stowmarket Water Works.

The ponds made by the Council are carefully inspected and cleaned out whenever necessary, and are kept fenced; some as at Stowupland supply by pipes and pumps large areas; they are of course not an absolutely safe source, but are infinitely surperior to the filthy and polluted ponds that they have replaced.

House Accommodation.

The chief occupation of the inhabitants of the District is agricultural. Cottage accommodation is very poor on the whole; they are mostly badly built, damp and insufficiently ventilated. A few new cottages have been built during the year, two very good ones at Gipping for instance, but more are badly needed.

Sewerage and Drainage.

The only sewers in the District are situated in the lower or Urban parts of Stowupland and Combs.

In Stowupland there is a total length of 4450 feet. There are 139 cottages in this part of the village, and of these 136 have been connected. A 30-feet Ventilation Shaft is to be erected on the highest part of sewer. In Combs there are 92 cottages, but the sewer does not reach all of them. There is a total length of 1300 feet; 29 houses have been connected during the year, making 47 in all.

The sewage from these two systems is pumped on to the sewage farm, through an eleven-inch rising main into filtering tanks; the sludge is separated and the effluent flows on to the land, then through ozier beds to the river. This sewage farm is worked by a joint committee with Stowmarket and this year shows a profit of £83 19s. 1d.

Cowsheds and Dairies.

During the year the Cowsheds and Dairies were inspected and were found on the whole to be in a satisfactory sanitary condition. New cowsheds were built on two farms in Wetherden, roomy and well ventilated.

On one farm at Stowupland the Cowsheds were not satisfactory and new ones will have to be built.

Nuisances: Notices served Inspections made, &c.

Sixteen official notices were served to abate nuisances; 13 have been complied with and 3 remain over.

Altogether 79 visits of inspection were made to the various villages during the year.

The nuisances in connection with the above will be found notified under the various villages.

The following details have reference to the various Villages in the District, the numbers in brackets to the population at the last census, and the area in acres.

BUXHALL (Population—402; Area—2523).

There were 10 Births (3 boys and 7 girls), the same number as last year.

There were 6 Deaths, compared with only 1 last year; 1 was of an infant under 1 year of age; 3 were of persons over 70 and 1 was due to an accident (a man belonging to Stowmarket).

There was 1 case of Diphtheria notified, compared with 4 infectious cases last year.

No nuisances were reported.

COMBS (1212; 2786).

There were 27 Births (11 boys, 17 girls, 4 illegitimate); compared with 20 last year.

There were 14 Deaths, the same number as last year; 4 of these were of infants under 1 year of age, 4 were of persons over 70; 1 was caused by Phthisis and 1 was due to an accident.

Three cases of Infectious Diseases were notified, compared with 5 last year, viz.: 2 cases of Scarlet Fever and 1 of Diphtheria, all in the upper part of the village; the case of Diphtheria was probably imported from Ipswich.

Two cases of overcrowding were investigated; in one case a man and his wife and seven children having three bedrooms, took in two young men lodgers. After a little difficulty the lodgers were prevailed upon to go elsewhere. In the other case the house was fairly roomy; there were four bedrooms for two families, 17 individuals altogether. Up to date the family lodging with the other, although under notice to go, cannot do so as they cannot obtain other accommodation.

In September the sewer was blocked owing to not sufficient water being used in Cottages for flushing drains; several houses were connected with this sewer during the year as mentioned above.

One nuisance was reported as caused by vault overflowing and was remedied.

CREETING ST. PETER (231; 1313).

There were 6 Births (5 boys, 1 girl), compared with 5 last year.

There were 5 Deaths, compared with 3 last year, 1 was of an infant under 1 year of age, 1 was of a person over 70; 2 were 2 children, brothers, accidentally drowned.

No cases of Infectious Diseases have been reported from this village for two years.

FINBOROUGH MAGNA & PARVA (445; 367).

There were 13 Births, 1 illegitimate (6 boys and 7 girls), compared with 10 last year.

There were 9 Deaths, compared with 5 last year; 1 was an infant under 1 year of age, 4 were of persons over 70; 1 was caused by Phthisis.

One case of Diphtheria was reported.

Nuisances were caused by overflowing vaults in connection with 11 cottages; the owners of the various properties were asked to re-construct and convert the P. V's. into pail closets. With regard to 5 cottages this has been done; in connection with the other 6 belonging to 1 owner, nothing has been done at present.

GIPPING (39; 1104).

There were 2 Births (boys), the same number as last year.

There were no Deaths, compared with 1 last year.

A nuisance was reported at the Children's Home caused by the filthy condition of the closet, the owner was written to about it, and it has since been remedied.

Five new cottages have been built in the village during the year, well arranged and roomy. I analysed the well water and found it satisfactory, and on my advice the well was rendered in cement for 5 feet from the top, and the top brought up above the ground.

HARLESTON (64; 615).

There were no Births, and only 1 Death of a child of 10; there has been 1 death each year in this village for the last four years.

No cases of Infectious Diseases were notified.

No nuisances were reported.

HAUGHLEY (738; 2485).

There were 20 Births (13 boys, 7 girls), the same number as last year.

There were 14 Deaths, the same number as last year; 1 was of an infant under 1 year of age, and 6 were of persons over 70; 2 were caused by Phthisis and 1 was suicidal.

A nuisance left over from last year has been abated; in the summer disinfectants were supplied by the Council for the open drain in the Street.

OLD NEWTON (619; 2348).

There were 16 Births (5 boys, 11 girls), compared with 13 last year.

There were 5 Deaths, the same number as last year; 1 was of an infant under 1 year of age, and 3 were of persons over 70; 1 was due to Phthisis and 1 was accidental.

A severe epidemic of Scarlet Fever broke out in this village at the end of November, (46 cases being notified), and is still spreading.

One case of overcrowding was reported, a man and his wife and 5 children sleeping in two small bedrooms of about 400 cub. feet capacity each. Two of the children have been sent out to sleep and one is to sleep downstairs.

ONEHOUSE (99; 898).

There were 9 Births (5 boys and 4 girls), 3 illegitimate; compared with 7 last year.

There were 3 Deaths, compared with 2 last year; one was of a person over 70.

No cases of Infectious Diseases were notified, and no nuisances were reported.

SHELLAND (89; 540).

There was 1 Birth, compared with 3 last year.

There were 2 Deaths, compared with the same number last year; 1 was of a person over 80 years of age, and the other was caused by Phthisis.

No cases of Infectious Diseases were notified, and no nuisances were reported.

WETHERDEN (400; 1830).

There were 17 Births (6 boys and 11 girls), 2 illegitimate, compared with 11 last year.

There were 4 Deaths, compared with 8 last year; 2 were of infants under 1 year of age, and the other 2 were over 80, 1 being 91, and her death was caused by an accident.

One case of Erysipelas was notified.

Nuisances were caused on two premises by the overflowing of the vaults into a ditch. After a little delay in both cases they were properly re-constructed, so as to avoid further nuisance of the same sort.

UNION WORKHOUSE (135).

There were 22 Deaths, compared with 9 last year; 19 were of persons over 70, (10 of them over 80 and 3 over 90).

Ten of these Deaths were of persons belonging to Stowmarket, 8 to the Thedwastre District, and 4 to the East Stow District.

One case of Diphtheria was notified, a tramp, and he was placed in the isolation building of the Workhouse.

STOWUPLAND (1326; 2840).

There were 30 Births (15 boys and 15 girls), one was illegitimate; compared with 41 last year.

There were 19 Deaths, compared with 15 last year; 5 of these deaths were of infants under 1 year of age, 7 were of persons over 70; 4 were caused by Phthisis.

Five cases of Infectious Diseases were notified, 4 of Diphtheria and 1 of Enteric Fever; in the latter case the only water supply was a very filthy pond, quite unfit for drinking. The owner was written to about it.

A case of overcrowding was reported, man, his wife, and 7 children; 3 of the children are to live elsewhere.

Several owners were required to disconnect the rain water pipes in connection with their cottages from the sewer.

In conclusion, I have to acknowledge the help I have received from the Sanitary Inspector, and to thank the Chairman and Members for the considerate manner in which they have received my suggestions during the year.

I have the honour to remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

CHAS W. LOW, M.B., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health.

Table I shows the estimated population, and Birth and Death Rates for the last 10 years.

Table III shows the cases of Infectious Diseases notified, and particulars as to age.

Table IV shows the causes of, and ages at Death during the year.

Table V gives the details of the Infant Mortality.

TABLE I.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1908 and previous Years.

Year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births.		Total Deaths registered in the District.				Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Non-residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.	Nett Deaths at all Ages belonging to the District.	
				Under 1 yr. of age		At all ages.						
		Number	Rate.*	Number	Rate per 1,000 Births registrd.	Number	Rate.*				Number	Rate.*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1898	6106	167	27.3	26	153	115	18.8	20	12		103	16.8
1899	6100	165	27.0	20	121	97	15.7	19	14		83	13.6
1900	6100	139	22.5	12	86	89	14.5	15	11		78	12.7
1901	5929	158	26.6	16	101	111	18.7	20	16		95	16.0
1902	5926	179	30.2	13	86	99	16.7	12	6	1	94	15.8
1903	5907	158	26.9	17	106	88	14.8	11	8		80	13.5
1904	5890	160	27.1	18	112	82	13.9	16	11		71	12.0
1905	5875	138	23.4	20	144	90	15.3	13	7		83	14.1
1906	5860	148	25.2	18	121	95	16.2	20	14	1	82	13.9
1907	5845	147	24.9	19	129	80	13.6	9	5		75	12.8
Averages for years 1898-1907			26.0		115		15.8					14.1
1908	5830	152	26.0	16	105	102	17.4	22	18	2	86	14.7

*Rates in Columns 4, 8, and 13 calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water) .. 21200.

Total population at all ages at Census of 1901 .. .. 5926.

Number of inhabited houses .. .. 1345.

Average number of persons per house .. .. .. 4.4.

TABLE III.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1908.

Notifiable Disease.	Cases notified in whole district.					
	At all ages.	At Ages—Years.				
		1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 and upwards
Diphtheria	8		3	1	4	
Erysipelas	1					1
Scarlet Fever ..	46	10	25	7	4	
Enteric Fever ..	1				1	
Totals	56	10	28	8	9	1

TABLE IV.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during the Year 1908.

Causes of Death.	Deaths in whole District at subjoined Ages.							Total Deaths whether of Residents or Non "Residents" in Public institutions in the District.
	All Ages.	Under 1 year	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards	
Phthisis	11					7	4	
Other Tuberculous Diseases ..	1				1			
Cancer, malignant disease ..	6					1	5	
Bronchitis	4	2					2	
Pneumonia	4	2	1			1		
Alcoholism, Cirrhosis of Liver ..	2					2		
Venereal Diseases	1	1						
Premature Birth	3	3						
Diseases and Accidents of Parturition	2	1				1		
Heart Diseases	12	1		1		2	8	
Accidents	5			2		2	1	
Suicides	1					1		
Old Age	10						10	
All other causes	24	6	1			5	12	
All Causes	86	16	2	3	1	22	42	

TABLE V.

INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1908.

Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Under 1 week	1-2 Weeks	2-3 Weeks	3-4 Weeks	Total under 1 Month	1-2 Months	4-5 Months	6-7 Months	7-8 Months	8-9 Months	Total Deaths under One Year
All Causes certified											
Premature Birth	2		1		3						3
Congenital Defects	1	1			2						2
Injury at Birth	1				1						1
Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus ..	1			1	2	1					3
Syphilis						1					1
Bronchitis							1			1	2
Pneumonia						1			1		2
Other Causes	1				1			1			2
					9						16

Births in the year	legitimate	141.
	illegitimate	11.
Deaths in the year of	legitimate infants	16.
	illegitimate infants	0.
Deaths from all causes at all ages		86.